

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested. By this Amendment, claims 12-19 and 25-27 are being amended to all ultimately depend from **allowed** independent claim 1. The addition of "new matter" has been scrupulously avoided. Claims 1-27 remain in this application.

In the last Office Action, claims 1-11 and 20-24 were allowed; claims 12-13, 16-19 and 25-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Rasmussen (WO 96/23719); claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Rasmussen; and claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Rasmussen in view of Robert et al. (US Patent No. 5,322,234).

These prior art rejections, to the extent that they may be deemed applicable to the claims as now presented, are respectfully but most strenuously traversed.

Since claim 1 has been allowed, all claims properly dependent from independent claim 1 are inherently also allowable. As now presented, claim 12 directly depends from independent claim 1, while claims 13-19 and 25-27 all ultimately depend from independent claim 1. Accordingly, all of these claims are clearly in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Since this Amendment clearly places all of the claims remaining in this application in condition for allowance, and neither raises a new issue nor requires a further search, entry and approval of this Amendment are respectfully requested.

If it would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact Applicant's representative at the below indicated telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeff Rothenberg, Reg. No. 26,429
Attorney for Applicant

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Heslin Rothenberg Farley & Mesiti P.C.
5 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203
Tel: 518-452-5600
Fax: 518-452-5579